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New York

President: Mr. Eliasson ..... (Sweden)

The meeting was called to order at 9.30 a.m.

Agenda item 112

Elections to fill vacancies in subsidiary organs and other elections:

(a) Election of twenty members of the Committee for Programme and Coordination

Note by the Secretary-General (A/50/216)

The President: I welcome you this morning. I know our friends of the Islamic faith are looking forward to this evening and I am particularly grateful for the cookies that were placed on the President's chair by the Syrian delegation.

Pursuant to General Assembly decision 42/450 of 17 December 1987 and upon the nomination by the Economic and Social Council, the Assembly elects the members of the Committee for Programme and Coordination.

The document before the Assembly contains the nominations by the Economic and Social Council to fill the vacancies in the Committee that will occur as a result of the expiration, on 31 December 2005, of the terms of office of Argentina, Armenia, Benin, Brazil, Canada, the Central African Republic, Cuba, Gabon, Germany, India, Indonesia, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Monaco, Nicaragua, Pakistan, the Republic of Moldova, South Africa, Switzerland, Ukraine and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. Those States are eligible for immediate re-election.

I should like to remind Members that, after 1 January 2006, the following States will still be members of the Committee: Algeria, the Bahamas, China, the Comoros, France, Ghana, Jamaica, Japan, Kenya, Mexico, the Republic of Korea, the Russian Federation, the United States of America and Zimbabwe. Therefore, those 14 States are not eligible to run in this election.

I should now like to inform Members that the following States have been nominated by the Economic and Social Council.

The four African States for four vacancies are: Benin, the Central African Republic, Senegal and South Africa. The four Asian States for four vacancies are: India, Indonesia, the Islamic Republic of Iran and Pakistan. The three Eastern European States for three vacancies are: Armenia, Belarus and Bulgaria. The four Latin American and Caribbean States for four vacancies are: Argentina, Brazil, Cuba and Uruguay. The three Western European and other States for five vacancies are: Italy, Portugal and Switzerland. The Council postponed the nomination of the two remaining States to a later date.

In accordance with rule 92 of the rules of procedure, all elections should be held by secret ballot and there shall be no nominations. However, I should like to recall paragraph 16 of General Assembly decision 34/401, whereby the practice of dispensing

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with the secret ballot for elections to subsidiary organs, when the number of candidates corresponds to the number of seats to be filled, should become standard, unless a delegation specifically requests a vote on a given election.

In the absence of such a request, and I see no indication of such in the Hall, may I take it that the Assembly decides to proceed to the election on the basis of dispensing with the secret ballot?

It was so decided.

The President: The number of States nominated from among the African States, the Asian States, the Eastern European States, the Latin American and Caribbean States and the Western European and other States is equal to or does not exceed the number of seats to be filled in each of those groups.

May I, therefore, take it that the Assembly wishes to declare those States nominated by the Council from among the African States, the Asian States, the Eastern European States, the Latin American and Caribbean States and the Western European and other States, namely: Argentina, Armenia, Belarus, Benin, Brazil, Bulgaria, the Central African Republic, Cuba, India, Indonesia, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Italy, Pakistan, Portugal, Senegal, South Africa, Switzerland and Uruguay, elected members of the Committee for Programme and Coordination for a three-year term of office beginning on 1 January 2006?

It was so decided.

The President: I congratulate the 18 States that have been elected members of the Committee for Programme and Coordination. Regarding the two remaining vacancies from among the Western European and other States, the General Assembly will be in a position to act on them upon the nomination by the Economic and Social Council of two Member States from that region.

We have thus concluded this stage of our consideration of sub-item (a) of agenda item 112.

(b) Election of twenty-nine members to the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme

The President: Pursuant to General Assembly resolution 2997 (XXVII) of 15 December 1972 and Assembly decision 43/406 of 24 October 1988, the Assembly will proceed to the election of 29 memb of the Governing Council of the United Nati Environment Programme to replace those memb whose term of office expires on 31 December 2005.

The 29 outgoing members are Antigua a Barbuda, Argentina, Belgium, Canada, Chad, Chi the Congo, Cuba, the Czech Republic, Fran Germany, Greece, Indonesia, Japan, Kenya, Myanm Namibia, Nicaragua, Nigeria, the Republic of Kor Romania, the Russian Federation, the Sud Switzerland, the Syrian Arab Republic, the Uni States of America, Uruguay, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

Those States are eligible for immediate election.

I should like to remind members that, after January 2006, the following States will still members of the Governing Council: the Baham Bangladesh, Brazil, Bulgaria, Burkina Fa Cameroon, Cape Verde, Colombia, Costa Rica, Gha Hungary, India, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Isra Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Mexico, Monaco, Moroc the Netherlands, Poland, Saudi Arabia, Seneg Somalia, Sweden, Turkey, Tuvalu, the United Kingd of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the Uni Republic of Tanzania.

Therefore, those 29 States are not eligible in t election.

As members know, in accordance with rule 92 the rules of procedure, all elections shall be held secret ballot and there shall be no nominations.

However, I should like to recall paragraph 16 General Assembly decision 34/401, whereby practice of dispensing with the secret ballot elections to subsidiary organs when the number candidates corresponds to the number of seats to filled should become standard, unless a delegati specifically requests a vote on a given election.

In the absence of such a request, may I take it t the Assembly decides to proceed to the election on t basis?

It was so decided.

The President: Regarding candidatures, I ha been informed by the Chairmen of the regional grou that for the eight seats from the Group of Afric States, the eight endorsed candidates are Alge

Angola, Botswana, Burundi, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Kenya, South Africa and Uganda.

For the six seats from the Group of Asian States, the six endorsed candidates are China, Indonesia, Japan, Pakistan, the Republic of Korea and Thailand.

For the three seats from the Group of Eastern European States, the three endorsed candidates are the Czech Republic, Romania and the Russian Federation.

For the five seats from the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States, the five endorsed candidates are Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Chile, Haiti and Uruguay.

For the seven seats from the Group of Western European and other States, the seven endorsed candidates are Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, France, Germany and the United States of America.

Since the number of candidates endorsed by the African States, the Asian States, the Eastern European States, the Latin American and Caribbean States and the Western European and other States corresponds to the number of seats to be filled in each region, may I take it that the General Assembly decides to elect those candidates as members of the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme for a four-year term of office beginning on 1 January 2006? I see no objection.

It was so decided.

The President: The following 29 States have thus been elected members of the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme for a four-year term of office beginning on 1 January 2006: Algeria, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Botswana, Burundi, Canada, Chile, China, the Czech Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, France, Germany, Haiti, Indonesia, Japan, Kenya, Pakistan, the Republic of Korea, Romania, the Russian Federation, South Africa, Thailand, Uganda, the United States of America and Uruguay.

I congratulate the States which have been elected members of the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme.

This concludes our consideration of sub-item (b) of agenda item 112.

Agenda item 115

Implementation of the resolutions of the United Nations

The President: It is my understanding that there is no request to consider agenda item 115 at the current session.

May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to defer consideration of the item to the sixty-first session and to include it in the provisional agenda of the sixty-first session?

It was so decided.

The President: This concludes our consideration of agenda item 115.

Agenda item 113

Appointments to fill vacancies in subsidiary organs and other appointments

(f) Appointment of members of the Committee on Conferences

Note by the Secretary-General (A/60/106)

The President: As indicated in document A/60/106, since the terms of office of Bolivia, the Congo, France, India, Japan, the Russian Federation and Zambia will expire on 31 December 2005, it will be necessary for the President of the General Assembly to appoint, during the current session, seven members to fill the resulting vacancies. The members so appointed will serve for a period of three years, beginning on 1 January 2006.

After consultations with the Chairmen of the groups of African States, Asian States, Eastern European States, Latin American and Caribbean States and Western European and other States, I have appointed Burundi, El Salvador, France, Lesotho, Malaysia, the Philippines and the Russian Federation as members of the Committee on Conferences for a period of three years, beginning on 1 January 2006.

May I take it that the Assembly takes note of these appointments?

It was so decided.

The President: We have thus concluded our consideration of sub-item (f) of agenda item 113.

Agenda item 48

Sport for peace and development

(a) Building a peaceful and better world through sport and the Olympic ideal

Draft resolution (A/60/L.15)

(b) International Year of Sport and Physical Education

Report of the Secretary-General (A/60/217)

Draft resolution (A/60/L.7)

The President: As a fan of sports and a believer in sport as a unifying force in international relations, I am pleased that today the General Assembly is taking action on agenda item 48, entitled "Sport for peace and development", which includes sub-item (a), "Building a peaceful and better world through sport and the Olympic ideal", and sub-item (b), "International Year of Sport and Physical Education".

As overall guidance for today's debate, I call the attention of members to the outcome document (*resolution 60/1*) of the September world summit, which, in its paragraph 145, declares,

> "We underline that sports can foster peace and development and can contribute to an atmosphere of tolerance and understanding, and we encourage discussions in the General Assembly for proposals leading to a plan of action on sport and development".

Our deliberations should also be inspired by the report of the Secretary-General entitled "Sport for peace and development: International Year of Sport and Physical Education" (*A/60/217*).

Turning to the first sub-item, I wish to recall that the General Assembly has for more than a decade supported the revival of the ancient Greek tradition of the Olympic Truce. As we approach the XX Olympic Winter Games, to be held in Turin, Italy, in February 2006, we should once again remind ourselves of the purpose of the Olympic Truce: to encourage a peaceful environment during the Games, to ensure safe passage for athletes and others at the Games and to mobilize the world's young people around the cause of peace.

With regard to this topic, Italy has submitted a draft resolution (*A/60/L.15*) on building a peaceful and better world through sport and the Olympic ideal. I welcome the universal support it has received.

Concerning the other sub-item, I wish to salute all those around the world who have helped to make the International Year of Sport and Physical Education a success, including United Nations offices, agencies, funds and programmes, Governments, the Olympic movement, sports federations, sports teams, sports organizations and other non-governmental organizations, sports stars and the countless athletes and other individuals who have joined in activities marking the Year. Yesterday, I met the marathon gold-medal winner Tegla Loroupe and was inspired by her efforts and those of the Olympic Committee to advance sports as a uniting force in international relations.

As the report of the Secretary-General indicates, sport can play a significant role in accelerating progress towards the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. The International Year of Sport and Physical Education has highlighted that contribution and adds strong impetus to efforts to better integrate sport into the development agenda.

Sport is essential for the well-being of young people in refugee camps, for example, not only to promote health and education, but also as a vehicle for alerting them to the risks of HIV/AIDS, for instilling self-respect and teamwork and for encouraging tolerance and peace. Peace is also recognized as a key in the promotion of equality and advancement for women and girls, especially when combined with education initiatives that give them the opportunity to build self-confidence and encouraging them to stay in school.

With regard to this sub-item, Tunisia has submitted a draft resolution (*A/60/L.7*) on sport as a means of promoting education, health, development and peace in order to follow up on the recommendations of the Secretary-General.

I now give the floor to the representative of Italy to introduce draft resolution A/60/L.15.

Mr. Mantovani (Italy): At the outset, I want to apologize on behalf of our Deputy Foreign Minister, who was unable to come to New York owing to unforeseen circumstances.

This year, Italy, as host country of the 2006 Winter Olympic Games in Turin, has the honour to present draft resolution on the Olympic Truce (*A/60/L.15*). I am proud to announce that, with the added sponsorship of Kiribati, this year's draft resolution has attracted a record number of sponsors: 191. There could be no clearer statement of universal support for the principles affirmed in the text.

The draft resolution on the Olympic Truce is an initiative that was first taken by the General Assembly in 1993, after an appeal by the International Olympic Committee had allowed athletes of war-torn Yugoslavia to participate in the 1992 Barcelona Summer Games. As we all know, the Olympic Truce is rooted in the traditions of the classical Olympic games. In ancient Greece, the Olympic Truce, or *ekecheiria*, provided for a cessation of hostilities to allow athletes, pilgrims and spectators to reach Olympia in order to participate in or watch the games and, upon their conclusion, return home in full security.

It is therefore a very fortunate coincidence — which is not without symbolic significance — that Italy, in presenting the draft resolution on the Olympic Truce, comes immediately after Greece, which in 2003 assumed a similar responsibility as host country of the 2004 Athens Olympic Games. There is another happy coincidence in the fact that the General Assembly, by its resolution 58/5 of 3 November 2003, proclaimed 2005 as the International Year of Sport and Physical Education, which leads us to trust in the heartfelt commitment of all Member States to the Olympic Truce and the relationship among sport, peace and development.

In that regard, I welcome and support the draft resolution to be introduced by Tunisia, entitled "Sport as a means to promote education, health, development and peace" (*A/60/L.7**). The Italian Government is also particularly glad to welcome the joint initiative between the Organizing Committee of the Winter Olympic Games in Turin and UNICEF Italy to work together so that the Olympic Truce can benefit all children around the world.

I should now like to briefly illustrate the contents of the draft resolution that the Assembly is, I hope, about to adopt with the unanimous support of its members. The text, entitled "Building a peaceful and better world through sport and the Olympic ideal", recalls previous General Assembly resolutions and refers to the Millennium Declaration adopted in 2000, which contains an appeal to observe the Olympic Truce. In addition, the draft resolution salutes the joint efforts of the International Olympic Committee and the United Nations in the areas of human development, poverty reduction, humanitarian assistance, health promotion, HIV/AIDS prevention, combating malaria, tuberculosis and other infectious diseases, basic education, equal opportunity and environmental protection.

The draft resolution recognizes the importance of the role of sports in pursuing the development goals agreed to at the international level, including those contained in the Millennium Declaration, and reaffirms the commitments assumed in that regard by the heads of State or Government at the High-level Plenary Meeting held in New York in September. Reaffirming the principles of mutual understanding, friendship, solidarity and justice that underlie the Olympic ideal, the draft resolution requests United Nations Member States to observe the Olympic Truce on the occasion of the XX Winter Olympic Games, which will take place in Turin from 10 to 26 February 2006, and the subsequent Paralympic Games, which will take place also in Turin from 10 to 19 March 2006.

It also welcomes the decision of the International Olympic Committee to mobilize world sports organizations and national Olympics committees around the goal of taking concrete measures to promote a culture of peace at the local, national, regional and world level. The draft resolution, finally, requests the Secretary-General of the United Nations to promote observance of the Olympic truce among Member States and appeals to them to cooperate with the International Olympic Committee and the United Nations agencies and programmes involved, to use the Olympic truce as an occasion to promote peace during and after the period of the Games and to implement projects that highlight sports as an instrument of development.

Since ancient times, the idea of the Olympic Games has been closely associated with that of peace. The spirit of this draft resolution is true to that origin, although it has been updated to correspond to the more pressing needs of today's world, in view of maintaining peace, promoting development, fostering dialogue, cooperation and a better and deeper understanding among and between different cultures and civilizations.

The ancient tradition of the Olympic truce is the expression today of humanity's desire to build a world based on the rules of fair competition, humanity, reconciliation and tolerance. For my country, hosting the Olympics once again and appealing to the world to observe the Olympic Truce are both an honour and a responsibility. But the success of a global event such as the Olympics and the achievement of a global objective such as the Olympic Truce depend essentially on the heartfelt and harmonious support of the international community as a whole. Today, we all have the opportunity to give tangible expression to this support.

Mr. Hachani (Tunisia) (*spoke in French*): Sir, before discussing agenda item 48 (b), allow me first of all to thank you on behalf of Tunisia for your recent statement on the World Summit on the Information Society. We are convinced that your appeal for high-level participation in the second phase of the Summit, which will be held in Tunis from 16 to 18 November, will be heeded and that all the parties concerned, be they Governments, civil society or private sector organizations, will seize the opportunity offered by this important event to achieve results worthy of the aspirations of the international community.

In September heads of State and Government underscored that sport could foster peace and development and contribute to creating a climate of tolerance and understanding. They also used that opportunity to strengthen their commitment vis-à-vis the principles underlying the Charter of the United Nations, including peacebuilding, security and development, as well as their commitment regarding the means to attain that goal, particularly at this delicate stage in which the world finds itself.

Sport and physical education were acknowledged as being among the factors which influence the life of a society, in addition to political and economic aspects. Indeed, the positive effect of sport is not confined to the promotion of health and development of the body, but consists also in acquiring the necessary values for social interdependence, the strengthening of friendships, the enrichment of dialogue and the maintenance of contacts among races, cultures and civilizations. It is in this context that Tunisia's initiative should be viewed — an initiative that was taken two years ago with the support of most Member States to strengthen the role of sport in promoting education, health, development and peace.

It is a pleasure for me once again this year to present, on behalf of my delegation and the other sponsors, draft resolution A/60/L.7*, entitled "Sport as a means to promote education, health, development and peace". Since the publication of this document, the following countries have become sponsors: Andorra, Argentina, Brunei Darussalam, Côte d'Ivoire, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Dominican Republic, France, Gabon, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malta, Saint Lucia, San Marino, Thailand and Togo.

This draft is intended as a means of contributing to the attainment of internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the Millennium Declaration, aimed at achieving greater solidarity and cooperation as well as at disseminating the culture of peace. Based primarily on prior resolutions on this subject, the text was the object of wide consultation and is the result of collective effort.

On this occasion, I would like to thank most warmly all delegations and United Nations bodies, in particular the head of the New York office of the Special Advisor to the Secretary-General on Sport for Development and Peace, for the interest they have shown in this draft resolution and for their determination to contribute to the attainment of the goals set for the International Year of Sport and Physical Education 2005. My thanks go as well to Mr. Adolph Ogi, the Special Advisor to the Secretary-General on Sport for Development and Peace, and Mr. Jacques Rogge, President of the International Olympic Committee, for the ceaseless efforts they are exerting in this regard.

The draft invites Governments and concerned governmental entities and institutions involved in sport to strengthen the importance of sport and physical education in their development policies and to promote them as a means of attaining the goals of development and of strengthening the opportunities for providing solidarity and cooperation to disseminate the culture of peace and the values of dialogue, understanding and friendship among peoples.

The draft resolution is also aimed at encouraging Governments and international sports bodies to undertake partnership initiatives and development projects of their own that contribute to achieving the Millennium Development Goals, and to assist developing countries consolidate their potential in the field of sport and physical education. It advocates a

number of measures, including those through which sport and physical education could contribute to peaceful world and to the attainment of the Olympic ideal.

The draft underscores in particular the will of the international community to maintain the dynamic trend begun by the International Year for Sports and Physical Education, which is a means of promoting education, health, development and peace, particularly by elaborating a plan of action aimed at developing and strengthening partnerships between the United Nations and Governments, sport-related organizations and the private sector. This plan should be based on an assessment of progress attained, of the measures adopted and the difficulties encountered in the course of making sport a tool for the promotion of development and peace.

As we congratulate the UNESCO General Conference for adopting the International Convention Against Doping in Sport at its thirty-third session, we appeal to all Member States to adhere to the Convention as soon as possible.

On behalf of the Tunisian delegation and of the other sponsors, we hope this draft resolution will enjoy the unanimous support of the General Assembly.

Allow me now to share the following with you briefly on behalf of my country. In Tunisia we have worked to ensure that physical education and sport play an essential role in our educational system as a factor in bringing about physiological, psychological and social balance, above and beyond the role of strengthening development in our country.

We are also working to inculcate sporting values and the Olympic spirit among our young people at all levels of education and training, as well as on the professional and civic levels. We have endeavoured to ensure that friendship and mutual respect prevail in relations among Tunisian athletes, as well as between them and athletes throughout the world, with the aim of strengthening the ties of mutual understanding, friendship and tolerance between all the peoples of the world.

Deeply convinced of its approach, Tunisia is working to strengthen those values by putting in place a comprehensive educational, social and development policy that considers sport and physical education as effective training and development tools in promoting education, health, development and peace. The noble ideal of sport leads us today to join our efforts with those of the international community to make sport an instrument to strengthen peace and promote development throughout the world, as well as to guarantee the right of children and young people of all ages everywhere to physical education and the practice of sport and to profit as much as possible from its physical, health and intellectual benefits. We also hope that sport will be recognized as an effective tool in spreading development throughout the world, especially in least developed countries, where there is insufficient sporting equipment and infrastructure in terms of variety and quantity.

In closing, I wish to take this opportunity to reaffirm Tunisia's support for the Olympic Truce initiative. Working closely with the delegation of Italy and motivated by our belief that sport, physical education and the ideals of the Olympics all contribute to the same objectives, the delegation of Tunisia has striven to ensure the complementary nature of the Truce initiative and the draft resolution that I have just introduced.

The President: I wish to underscore the importance of the comments made by the representative of Tunisia early in his statement with regard to the meeting to be held in Tunis on 16 and 18 November.

Mr. Maurer (Switzerland) (*spoke in French*): My delegation welcomes the Secretary-General's report to the sixtieth session of the General Assembly entitled "Sport for peace and development: International Year of Sport and Physical Education" (*A/60/217*). We are also very pleased that the report is being debated along with two draft resolutions, and we welcome the statements made a few moments ago by our colleagues from Italy and Tunisia. The three documents complement each other and represent an encouraging development, namely, the growing consensus throughout the world today that sport and physical education can make a significant contribution to achieving development objectives, especially the Millennium Development Goals.

More than ever before, there is today a desire on the part of the United Nations system, Governments, sports organizations, development agencies and the private sector to more specifically and systematically harness the great positive potential of sport and

physical education to promote development, education, peace and health. The many different and widely supported initiatives and activities at the local, national and global levels that have taken place in connection with the 2005 International Year of Sport and Physical Education attest resoundingly to that that desire.

None of that would have been possible without the outstanding commitment of the Secretary-General and his Special Adviser on Sport for Development and Peace. Switzerland congratulates and thanks them for their tireless efforts.

A solid foundation has been laid in the last few years to promote the International Year of Sport and Physical Education. It is now up to all stakeholders to agree on a common vision, aims and areas for action for the future. It is also necessary for that framework be put into operation.

Switzerland intends to contribute to that effort. From 4 to 6 December 2005, Switzerland will host the second Magglingen Conference on Sport and Development, which will mark both the culmination and conclusion of the International Year of Sport and Physical Education. It will pick up where the first Magglingen Conference on Sport and Development left off. The first Conference, which took place in Switzerland in February 2003, drew 380 representatives from 55 countries, representing all segments of society. Today, the Conference's declarations and recommendations continue to be a source of inspiration and guidance for sporting and development activities throughout the world.

In this regard, the three following key issues must be addressed.

First, we must take stock by assessing the results of the International Year of Sport and Physical Education and evaluate experiences in that connection. We must also put forth concrete initiatives, projects and programmes from around the world.

Secondly, we must undertake advocacy and awareness-raising initiatives in order to further promote understanding among the general public and relevant players about the great potential of sport in promoting development and peace, as well as to promote the integration of sport and physical education into regional, national and global development strategies.

Lastly, we must sustain the existing momentum by considering areas of joint future action, laying the foundations for a global peace and development network and establishing innovative partnerships and specific arrangements for cooperation.

The theme of December's Magglingen Conference is "Development through sport: moving to the next stage". That theme expresses our conviction that the time is ripe for a significant intensification of our efforts and activities. That will be essential if we are to take advantage of the existing momentum and to tap over the long term the enormous potential that sport holds for development and peace.

The matter of financing an adequate long-term structure for sport for development and peace within the United Nations system remains unresolved. Nevertheless, we would like to point out the importance of the need for a practical and speedy solution to that question.

The draft resolutions being debated today embody this spirit. Switzerland, as host country to the International Olympic Committee and numerous other international sport associations, fully supports them.

In closing, allow me to make some comments beyond those contained in the prepared text I have circulated.

We are now working with determination and commitment to give shape to the decisions taken during September's High-level Plenary Meeting of the General Assembly. But at the same time, the Government of Switzerland believes that we can give added weight and meaning to our efforts if we further commit ourselves to opening up the United Nations to civil society, the economy and sport. From the beginning of his mandate, the Secretary-General set out for us his vision of such an opening. He has since developed that vision. He deserves our ongoing commitment.

Mr. Acklie (United States of America): The delegation of the United States welcomes the General Assembly's consideration today of agenda item 48, as well as the draft resolutions entitled "Building a peaceful and better world through sport and the Olympic ideal" (*A/60/L.15*) and "Sport as a means to promote education, health, development and peace" (*A/60/L.7**). The Former refers to the Olympic Truce,

and both refer to the International Year of Sport and Physical Education.

To add to the spirit of sportsmanship today, the delegation of the United States invited several Olympians to be present in the Hall. They are: Otis Davis, medallist in the 400 and 1600 metre relay in 1960; Elliott Denman, medallist in the 50,000 metre walk in 1956; Hazel Greene of Ireland, medallist in archery in 1980, 1985 and 1988; and Tegla Loroupe of Kenya, two-time winner of the New York Marathon, which will take place again this weekend. In addition, Bruce McDonald, medallist in the 20,000 and 50,000 metre walk in 1956, 1960 and 1964, and Gordon McKenzie, medallist in the 10,000 metre and the marathon in 1956 and 1960, respectively. May we have those gentlemen and ladies stand?

Their presence here today highlights the high regard in which our Olympians hold the Truce and safe passage, and their solidarity with the United Nations. As President George W. Bush acknowledged when meeting with Olympians in 2002, sport teaches us to be humble in victory, gracious in defeat, compassionate for competitors and tolerant and appreciative of diversity.

It is for these reasons that the United States Government has supported international athletic competitions. Indeed, such competitions promote understanding and respect for cultural diversity, foster international partnerships and increase awareness of global social issues such as human rights, the role of women in society and drug abuse prevention. Moreover, international athletic competitions generate a deep sense of national pride while also fostering a spirit of international solidarity. The United States record includes hosting eight modern Olympic Games.

One of America's proudest inventions, baseball, has proven to be one of America's proudest exports. Little League baseball and softball leagues have been formed in over 75 countries, with 180,000 teams serving nearly 2.7 million boys and girls. Since its establishment in 1939, Little League has grown from three teams to nearly 200,000 teams in all 50 U.S. states and more than 80 countries.

Today the Assembly can support the peaceful environment that sport generates. Our delegation supports today's draft resolutions (*A/60/L.7* and L.15*), submitted by Italy and Tunisia, both of which use sport as a means to promote friendship, mutual understanding and well-being.

The United States particularly supports the request to undertake concrete action to promote a culture of peace based on the spirit of the Olympic Truce. Therefore, regarding sub-item (a) of agenda item 48, "Building a peaceful and better world through sport and the Olympic ideal", the United States would like to thank the Italian mission for its hard work in initiating the draft resolution in support of the Olympic Truce. The United States is pleased to join other Member States in co-sponsoring yet again this symbolically significant initiative. By calling for the safe passage and participation of athletes at the XX Olympic Winter Games in Turin, followed immediately by the Paralympic Games, the Truce is intended to foster international understanding, peace and goodwill.

The United States has regarded the Olympics movement as a catalyst toward the virtues that President Bush ascribes to sport. For example, the United States Government, in partnership with the International Olympic Committee and the United States Olympic Committee, assisted in training the Iraqi archery team, Iraqi wrestlers, boxers and a paralympian fencer, to prepare them for the 2004 Olympic Games in Greece and to help Iraq re-enter the international sports community.

As regards draft resolution A/60/L.7*, "Sport as a means to promote education, health, development and peace", we thank the Tunisian delegation for taking the initiative on that draft, and we take note of Tunisia's contribution in hosting an international conference to highlight the critical role of sport in health promotion and in the framework of the International Year for Sport and Physical Education. Likewise, we thank the Secretariat for its report, "Sport for peace and development: International Year of Sport and Physical Education" (*A/60/217*). We endorse its praise of national activities pursued during the Year towards "raising public awareness about the benefits of sport and physical education in social and educational programmes" and making "the direct link to sustainable peace and human development" (*ibid., para. 12*)

Furthermore, the United States delegation acknowledges the valuable contributions being made by the United Nations Office for the International Year of Sport and Physical Education, the Office of the

Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Sport for Development and Peace, the United Nations New York Office of Sport for Development and Peace and by Mr. Adolf Ogi of Switzerland, the Secretary-General's Special Adviser on Sport for Development and Peace.

As the report notes, those United Nations offices have managed to utilize sports programmes as components of development strategies in cooperation with non-governmental organizations, sport federations, the private sector, foundations and others. These are promising activities through which the international community might work toward realizing the goals of the United Nations Charter.

We look forward to ensuring that our efforts to use sport continue beyond the International Year and have long-term results, as recommended by the report. We will continue to look for ways to partner with civil society and the private sector to promote sport as a means of promoting intercultural, post-conflict and peacebuilding dialogues.

Through our sport exchanges, young people have discovered how success in athletics builds self-confidence and the skills required for achievement in life. Recently, former members of the National Basketball Association and the Women's National Basketball Association conducted clinics in Senegal and Nigeria for hundreds of youth, engaged in dialogue and donated 12,000 pairs of Reebok basketball shoes. Through such programmes, the United States will continue to reach out to youth around the world with a message of America's commitment to international understanding, cultural tolerance and mutual respect.

As regards physical education more specifically, for many years the United States President's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports has served well as an advisory committee of citizen volunteers. Through various creative initiatives, the Council promotes health, physical activity, fitness and enjoyment for people of all ages, backgrounds and abilities through participation in physical activity and sport. At the Council's website, citizens of all ages can sign up for the Presidential Champions programme that provides particular physical activity plans to fit individual needs. The programme is a signature part of a wider Healthier American agenda.

Also, we note the draft resolution's invitation to consider ratifying the International Convention Against Doping in Sport and that it commends UNESCO on its successful negotiation. The United States, however, calls for States to take into account the World Anti-Doping Code of March 2003, which has the support of more than 150 countries. It would be helpful to avoid a duplication of effort or the possibility of a conflict between those two instruments.

Sport exercises a deep hold on the human imagination. Sport transcends all perceived barriers across ethnicities, ages, genders, religions and abilities, and sport reminds us of our common humanity.

Ms. Khalil (Egypt) (*spoke in Arabic*): On the national level, sport and physical education play an important part in economic and social development and in the improvement of public health, and they bring local communities together. On the international level, sport and physical education can have a long-term positive effect on the development of public health, peace and the environment.

Egypt welcomes the efforts made internationally, regionally and locally and by the United Nations to celebrate the International Year of Sport and Physical Education. We wish to emphasize the importance of those occasions and activities as forums to create awareness among the young and to familiarize them with current challenges and to promote the spirit of competition, fraternity and tolerance. Young people can thus become United Nations goodwill ambassadors, because they are capable of communicating with other young people and can become examples for others to follow.

We wish also to emphasize the importance of the role of sport in fulfilling the MDGs, and we welcome efforts to use sport as a means of achieving development. We deem it useful for experts worldwide to share their knowledge, with a view to promoting health, peace, national reconciliation and the exchange of experiences. We stress also the need to set up sports structures in local communities so that they can become practical tools for sustainable development.

In Egypt, sport is pivotal to integral development, as it fosters a spirit of honest competition and tolerance among communities and peoples. Egypt continues to play a pioneering role in the area of sport and its development in Africa and in the Arab region. Egyptian athletes have held numerous important posts, including the presidency of the Volleyball Union. They have received many international medals in tennis, volleyball and basketball championships, and many

have been nominated as goodwill ambassadors to the United Nations.

My delegation wishes to emphasize two important points: the increase in racism, racial discrimination and intolerance, and, in sports competitions, an increase in the prevalence of doping.

As to the first question, Egypt wishes to express its concern with respect to the issues mentioned in the report of experts in terms of fighting racism, racial discrimination and intolerance, which are contrary to the values, ideals and principles of the Olympics. We believe that it is important to fight those phenomena and to encourage athletes not to discriminate on the basis of race, religion, colour or gender.

We must emphasize the negative long-term impact of doping on public health and development efforts. My delegation welcomes the preparation of a final draft international convention against doping in sport and calls for members to take it into consideration.

Mr. Xie Bohua (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): The Chinese delegation wishes to thank the Secretary-General for his report under agenda item 48 entitled "Sports for peace and development: International Year of Sport and Physical Education".

This year marks the sixtieth anniversary of the founding of the United Nations. Since its establishment, the United Nations has consistently attached great importance to the pivotal role and considerable influence of sports.

The United Nations has done a tremendous amount of work in promoting the Olympic spirit. The General Assembly has adopted a number of successive resolutions on an Olympic Truce, and it declared the year 2005 as the International Year of Sport and Physical Education.

Thanks to the joint efforts of the international community, sport has become a bridge enabling exchanges, mutual understanding and friendship among the peoples of the world, and it also plays a positive role in the maintenance of international peace and in the promotion of development.

The modern Olympic ideal of "higher, faster and stronger" has gone far beyond the realm of sports to become a spiritual force underlying humankind's pursuit of happiness, prosperity and a harmonious world. We hope that all countries will continue to work to realize the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, and hence promote the Olympic spirit as well as dialogue and exchanges among various civilizations, in an effort to create a peaceful and prosperous world.

The Chinese Government and people appreciate the Olympic spirit and fully recognize the important role of sport in peace and development. We commend Italy and Tunisia for having submitted two draft resolutions under this item and are pleased to co-sponsor them. In that connection, we would like also to express our heartfelt wishes for success in connection with the 2006 Winter Olympic Games in Turin, Italy.

The XXIX Olympic Games will be held in Beijing, China, in 2008. Preparations therefor are proceeding in an orderly manner. In keeping with the concept of "Green Olympics, High-tech Olympics, and People's Olympics", the Chinese Government will further promote the Olympic spirit with a view to making the Beijing Olympics a truly magnificent sports gathering that will help to promote and maintain world peace, strengthen ties of friendship among peoples, and promote dialogue and exchanges among different civilizations. China, which is at once ancient and modern, welcomes the arrival of friends from all countries.

Mr. Brousseau (Canada): Canada is pleased to take the floor today to address the draft resolution entitled "Building a peaceful and better world through sport and the Olympic ideal", put forward by the delegation of Italy.

Canada affirms its endorsement of and commitment to the principles and ideals that underpin this draft resolution.

(*spoke in French*)

By co-sponsoring this draft resolution, Canada reaffirms its longstanding recognition of sport as a vital factor in building sustainable communities, contributing to global peace, and encouraging healthy lifestyles among young people.

The power of sport to act as a positive catalyst for growth and change is evidenced through the efforts of countless humanitarian organizations, which use sport as a tool to help rebuild nations and to heal individuals and communities following periods of conflict.

(*spoke in English*)

Canada encourages Member States to recognize and support both the Olympic and Paralympic movements.

(*spoke in French*)

The importance of recognizing the Paralympic movement in the text of this draft resolution was a priority for Canada. This draft extends the period of the Olympic Truce beyond the XX Olympic Winter Games, to be held next February in Turin, Italy, so that it encompasses the Paralympic Winter Games, also in Turin in March 2006.

(*spoke in English*)

In closing, we are pleased to see a strong level of support among Member States both for this draft resolution and for constructive cooperation with concerned agencies and programmes of the United Nations and the International Olympic Committee.

Mr. Gillerman (Israel): The State of Israel is proud to lend its support and co-sponsorship to the draft resolution entitled "Building a peaceful and better world through sport and the Olympic ideal" and would also like to take this opportunity to congratulate Italy, the host country of the 2006 Winter Games.

Athletic competition provides an ideal medium for transcending national boundaries and fostering good will, better relations and mutual respect. The principles underlying athletic competition provide a channel through which people of different religious, cultural, racial and political backgrounds can interact and enhance their understanding of each other. By the same token, the contributions sports can make in promoting development, education and health shall not be underestimated. In many cases, athletic competition is a means to enhance relationships and build bridges. One notable recent example from our region is Qatar's contribution towards the building of a soccer stadium in the Israeli municipality Sakhnin, where the local soccer team, playing in the premier league, is composed of Jewish and Arab Israeli players. This is a welcome initiative, representing an opportunity for our countries to enhance relations on a people-to-people basis. We would like to call on other countries in our region to collaborate with us and replicate this gesture under the auspices of good sportsmanship.

Unfortunately, not all athletic events are carried out with the same positive sentiment as prevailed when they were founded. In some cases, athletic competition is abused as a tool for politicization. As noted in the report by the Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights on Contemporary Forms of Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerances, the noble ideas of competition and mutual respect are being eroded by the exacerbation of the nationalistic dimension of competitions and an overemphasis on money.

At the Olympic Games in Athens, for example, an Iranian judoka refused to compete with an Israeli athlete. After the Iranian withdrew from the tournament, according to Iran's official news service, the Government paid him $115,000, the amount awarded to gold medallists. A further contradiction of the important ideal to which the Olympics aspire is the manifestations of racism, anti-Semitism and other forms of intolerance in sports. Athletic competition and intolerance simply contradict each other. Given the attention by the Special Rapporteur to the manifestations of racism and anti-Semitism in sporting events during his last two reports, Israel sees merit in including a reference to that troubling phenomenon in the resolution of the Third Committee on the elimination of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance during this session of the General Assembly as well.

In this context, we would like to commend recent international efforts to reject the manifestation of racism and intolerance during sporting events. Anti-racism campaigns, such as the efforts by the Union of European Football Associations, Federation Internationale de Football Association (FIFA), Football Against Racism Europe (FARE), Let's Kick Racism Out of Football in the United Kingdom and similar activities throughout Europe, as well as those led by private companies, deserve praise and support from the international community. Israel's concern for this issue is reflected in our cooperation with several of those associations on a national level.

The ultimate example of political abuse, when all boundaries are broken and the sanctity of the Olympic ideal is violated, is when terrorists target athletes. The idea of the Olympic Games cannot be separated, in the memory of Israelis and people throughout the world, from the horrific act of terrorism that tarnished the 1972 Munich Games. At those Games, gunmen from

the terrorist group Black September broke into the Olympic Village disguised as athletes and killed eleven Israeli athletes and coaches. That horrific act of terrorism and murder is unprecedented in the annals of Olympic history and represents the very antithesis of the Olympic ideal. Rather than allowing the Games to transcend politics and conflict, the Games were used as a vehicle for the expression of hatred and the perpetration of murder. What is particularly disheartening is that the International Olympic Committee has yet to take a decision to officially observe the memory of the fallen Israeli athletes whenever the Olympics take place. This blemish on the history of the Games must not be forgotten as we strive to ensure that future Olympic events serve to broaden understanding, tolerance, respect and peace.

Israel reaffirms its support for the noble objectives of the draft resolution before us and for the observance of the Olympic truce. The Olympic Games are one of the world's only true global events and, as such, present us with an extraordinary opportunity to focus the world's attention and utilize the good will that the Games inspire to build a more peaceful and more harmonious world.

Mr. Rogachev (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): Sports and peace are closely linked concepts. The absence of war is a necessary condition for battle in the sports arena. Sports bring peoples together and the competition that is an essential component of sports activity does not mean combat with the enemy but rather competition among partners, colleagues, like-minded people, and, on the whole, a striving to improve.

The role of sport as an ambassador for peace is especially significant when it is joined with the noble traditions of the Olympic truce. The pressing need to educate future generations in the spirit of a culture of peace, non-violence and tolerance once again proves that not only is the Olympic ideal not outdated, but with time it is acquiring new, ever greater relevance. The flame of the Olympics should illuminate the path leading mankind to the third millennium and serve as a beacon indicating the way to peace without hostility and violence.

In a few months, this peaceful flame will glow over the lovely city of Turin, which will host the 2006 Winter Olympics. In this connection, we sincerely wish our Italian friends success in organizing this worldwide event and in the achievement of harmony through sports.

The International Year of Sport and Physical Education declared by the United Nations is coming to a close. Measures taken within that context have made a considerable contribution to resolving a number of social, economic, environmental, health and educational issues. To emphasize the role of sports in strengthening mutual understanding among peoples was the purpose of the International Conference on Sport and Peace, held in Moscow from 2 to 5 October, 2005 in the context of the International Year of Sport and Physical Education. Forty States were represented at the Conference, as were such international organizations as the United Nations, UNESCO, the Council of Europe and the World Anti-Doping Agency. During the course of the productive work, such timely issues as future prospects for international sports cooperation were discussed, and we determined practical objectives for activating multilateral interaction in that sphere, including within the context of the United Nations. As a result of the Conference, a declaration was adopted which in particular calls upon the world's politicians, athletes and sports organizations to use their authority to avoid conflict and to repudiate hostility and aggression and thus to aid the unification of the international community around the principles of peace and harmony.

Sport is a universal language. Due to the fact that representatives of different countries, cultures and beliefs participate in sports competitions, one can say with certainty that "sports diplomacy" is a powerful thing, capable of becoming an effective channel for the advancement of the culture of peace and dialogue among civilizations.

Mr. Kyaw Tint Swe (Myanmar), Vice-President, took the Chair.

Mr. Vassilakis (Greece): It is a great honour and pleasure for me to take the floor on agenda item 48 (a) to express my country's wholehearted support for draft resolution A/60/L.15, entitled "Building a peaceful and better world through sport and the Olympic ideal".

Two years ago, Greece presented a similar draft resolution as it prepared for the 2004 Athens Olympics. Resolution 58/6 received the widest possible support from Member States, giving new meaning and relevance to the ancient tradition of Olympic Truce — *ekecheiria* in Greek.

This year it is Italy's turn to uphold the tradition and submit a draft resolution urging Member States to observe, within the framework of the Charter, the Olympic Truce during the XX Olympic Winter Games, to be held in Turin from 10 to 26 February 2006, and the subsequent Paralympic Games. The wide support for this year's draft resolution underlines the international community's recognition of the goals set out therein and our common eagerness to celebrate the Games in peace, harmony and friendship. We wish both Italy and China, which is to follow as host in 2008, every success in organizing the Olympic Games.

In bringing the idea of the Olympic Truce to the forefront, we encourage the notion that it is possible to build a lasting peace from a pause in hostilities. That is, in fact, how the Olympic Games were conceived in the first place. In antiquity, the implementation of the Olympic Truce entailed a cessation of all hostilities in order to allow athletes and spectators to travel to and from Olympia and attend the sacred celebration of human achievement. Having been upheld for over a millennium, the Olympic Truce is the longest peace treaty in history.

It is widely believed that, because of communications technology, it is easier than ever to exchange ideas and to understand one another. However, in our modern Babel, misunderstandings prevail. Insecurity is a widespread feeling in every part of the world. We strive for dialogue among civilizations and cooperation among the rich and the poor, yet each day witnesses our failure. The Olympic Truce could be a constructive new approach to conflict resolution. The Olympic ideal is a universal language, in which all peoples can communicate and share the pleasure of the Games.

A few days before the 2004 Olympics in Athens, the Olympic torch came for the first time to the United Nations. In a joyous celebration, the fire from Olympia brought light to our Headquarters and carried the message of peace and solidarity. The United Nations and the Olympic movement are natural allies. They strive for the same goals and observe the same principles. They are useful tools in the hands of the international community. They are what we make of them. It is up to us, the Member States, to seize the opportunity offered by the draft resolution and to observe the Truce, for the benefit of our peoples.

We express our appreciation and support to the International Olympic Committee for its tireless efforts to promote the Olympic ideal and build bridges of understanding and cooperation. We commend the President of the International Olympic Committee, Mr. Jacques Rogge, for promoting the idea of the Olympic Truce. Greece will stand by him in his efforts to strengthen the Olympic movement.

This year, we are also celebrating the International Year of Sport and Physical Education. Important initiatives have been undertaken by some Member States, such as the International Conference on Sport and Peace organized by Russia in October and the International Conference on Sport and Education organized by Thailand, which ended yesterday. All over the world, it is widely recognized that sport has an important role to play in peace and development. It has become a national priority and an integral part of education programmes worldwide.

To teach sport to our children is to teach them the principles of the Olympic spirit. It is to teach them mutual understanding, friendship, solidarity and fair play, thus giving them the instruments with which to build a better future for themselves. That is why we have co-sponsored draft resolution A/60/L.7, introduced by Tunisia, entitled "Sport as a means to promote education, health, development and peace".

In closing, let me stress once again that by adopting today the draft resolution entitled "Building a peaceful and better world through sport and the Olympic ideal" we are taking a positive approach to life and to today's realities at the personal and national levels. We have no illusions, and we dream no utopian dreams. We are simply stating the obvious — if we can have peace in the world for 16 days, then maybe we can have it forever.

Mr. Labbé (Chile) (*spoke in Spanish*): I should like, first of all, to congratulate the Bureau for its leadership in guiding our work in the General Assembly.

Resolutions 58/5 of 3 November 2003 and 59/10 of 27 October 2004 declared 2005 as the International Year of Sport and Physical Education, seeing the Year as an important means to promote education, health, development and peace.

Likewise, paragraph 145 of the World Summit Outcome document (*resolution 60/1*) states,

"We underline that sports can foster peace and development and can contribute to an atmosphere of tolerance and understanding, and we encourage discussions in the General Assembly for proposals leading to a plan of action on sport and development."

Chile is pleased that we are currently in the process of implementing that mandate from our leaders, the result of tireless efforts by our country and others. It is in that context that my country decided to co-sponsor the draft resolutions entitled "Building a peaceful and better world through sport and the Olympic ideal" and "Sport as a means to promote education, health, development and peace", drawn up, respectively, by Italy and Tunisia, which Chile would like to congratulate for their patient preparatory work.

Chile would also like to thank and congratulate the Secretary-General for his report on sport for peace and development.

Chile firmly believes that those two draft resolutions can provide an excellent basis for our efforts to achieve full compliance with the major development goals set out in the Millennium Declaration. In this context, we recognize that the disciplines of sports and physical education are life-long pursuits and that they constitute an important tool, not only for health and physical development, but also for the acquisition and internalization of values that have a positive impact on social cohesiveness and facilitate intercultural dialogue.

That is why my country is fully convinced that, if we are to fully exploit the potential of sports activities in the framework of the International Year of Sport and Physical Education, further initiatives must be taken to make sports an effective tool for development and peace, at both the national and international levels.

Sports, healthy competition and the Olympic ideal conjure up positive images of understanding, of the overcoming of obstacles and of an appreciation of humankind worldwide. The ancient tradition of the Olympic Truce was an early demonstration of wisdom and compassion that we should replicate in this difficult but promising era.

According to the story retold so masterfully in the music of the great German composer Richard Strauss, the Olympic laurel comes from the sacred tree into which Daphne was transformed by the Olympic gods to place humankind and nature in an eternal embrace. Mindful of this image of beauty, harmony and peace, Chile undertakes to imbue the diplomatic relay race with energy and hope.

Mr. Al-Nasser (Qatar) (*spoke in Arabic*): Mr. President, allow me at the outset to extend once again, on behalf of the State of Qatar, our warm congratulations and sincere thanks to you for your competent stewardship of the work of the current session of the General Assembly. We would like to assure you anew of the full cooperation of the State of Qatar. Allow me also to take this opportunity to thank the Secretary-General for his valuable report under item 48 (b) of the agenda, entitled "Sports for peace and development: International Year of Sport and Physical Education" (*A/60/217*).

The report reaffirms the important contribution that sports and physical education can make to the achievement of peace and development, especially human development. For our part, we continue to support the objectives set by the United Nations system in the context of the International Year of Sport and Physical Education.

The State of Qatar believes that sports, peace and development must be viewed from a broader perspective. Indeed, the international community has recognized their synergy. Sports has always been an important factor that can bring people together in peace. Physical education has always been an important means of nurturing children in various societies and in enhancing tolerance and understanding among various cultures and different racial groups.

In that regard, the State of Qatar believes that due attention should be accorded the question of human development in the realm of sports and to the expansion of the concept of sports to include sports for all. Guided by those principles, the Government of the State of Qatar, on instructions from His Highness Sheikh Hamad Bin Khalifa Al-Thani, the Emir of the State of Qatar, has consistently sought to enhance its activities in the field of youth and sports and to participate in international efforts. Qatar aspires to building a prosperous society in which young people can reap the benefits of sports and profit from the values embodied in a world Olympic renaissance.

The State of Qatar has endeavoured to keep pace with the evolution of human aspirations in the field of sports. Thus it has striven to create a sound sports

environment for the younger generations that fulfils their ambitions, motivates them and assists them in the process of their development. Qatar supports the creative efforts under way to achieve a comprehensive social renaissance leading to a brighter future, on the basis of social development and the promotion of mechanisms to bring to fruition the endeavours of humankind and enhance its creative output.

Responding to the needs of youth, and in order to realize all the concepts and values of the Olympic movement, the State of Qatar is focusing on building youth hostels and on the establishment of Olympic-quality sports facilities and the development of related means and mechanisms. It is currently engaged in building the Olympic City in Doha in preparation for hosting the fifteenth Asian Games in 2006. In that regard, the State of Qatar has successfully hosted the Junior World Cup (FIFA) as well as the World Cup finals for the Asian continent in 1994, which made possible the achievements of its track and field team.

Qatar has also participated in numerous Olympic games and meetings. It looks forward to continuing to host sporting events and tournaments. The Public Authority for Youth and Sports in Qatar is working on an ongoing basis to highlight the value of cooperation among young people, promote the relationships between our youth and the youth of the world, and build bridges of hope and cooperation, mutual understanding, friendship and solidarity among peoples. The objective is to achieve the lofty Olympic goal of building a better future for humankind in the new world of the twenty-first century — a world in which trust among peoples is strengthened and in which, through common human endeavours, a bright future is realized, characterized by high ideals, lofty values and the capacity for creative Olympic competition.

At the dawn of the twenty-first century, humanity now more than ever must make strenuous efforts to seek detente among peoples and to bring about international peace and security based on justice and the equality of rights and obligations. In that regard, we must promote those practices that safeguard relations among peoples. We must also work in a collective framework in which sports and physical education create opportunities for solidarity — promoting the culture of peace and enhancing social and gender equality and the call for dialogue and harmony.

Moreover, we must acknowledge the contribution of sports and physical education to social and economic development as a means of achieving internationally agreed development objectives, including those contained in the Millennium Declaration, and the wider objectives of development, peace and security. We must also safeguard peace and security within and among nations. Furthermore, we must promote health awareness and the spirit of accomplishment; encourage communication among cultures; entrench the group spirit; and urge Governments, international sports bodies and sports organizations to formulate and implement partnership initiatives and development projects that are compatible with the educational curriculums used at all levels of education in order to help achieve the Millennium Development Goals.

It is important, therefore, to ensure that the eradication of poverty is the focus of special attention in the context of the campaign to promote the culture of peace, because peace is not merely the absence of violence and conflict; rather, it is closely linked to economic development, respect for human rights, solidarity among peoples, dialogue among cultures, sustainable human development, the free flow of information and knowledge, the management and prevention of conflict, post-conflict peacebuilding, and gender equality.

Hence, interaction between the culture of peace and sustainable development continues to be the cornerstone of the enterprise to which the international community must henceforth devote itself, armed with the necessary political will to transform into reality the basic and legitimate aspirations of peoples to a world of peace and justice, free from misery and poverty.

The International Year of Sport and Physical Education reaffirms the importance of sport and usefully contributes to international peace and security through an all-inclusive international partnership including the private sector, international sports federations, non-governmental organizations and public organizations. The United Nations can unite all sports-related organizations in order to reaffirm the role of sport as a real partner in achieving the objectives of peace and development.

Sport, by its nature, integrates citizens into society, removes barriers between different societies and acquaints groups and individuals with one another,

emphasizing what unites them and helping them overcome ethnic and cultural differences. That makes sport a powerful tool for supporting conflict prevention and peacebuilding efforts, within societies and at the international level, and for promoting the Dialogue among civilizations and the right of all peoples to self-determination and solidarity. Thus, sport helps make it possible to tackle global problems by sharing those responsibilities and by responding to the needs of the most disadvantaged.

Sport, peace, culture, the humanitarian impulse and respect for moral principles have been the essential ideals of the Olympic movement since the first games were held at Olympia in 776 B.C. The State of Qatar believes that sport and the Olympic ideal without doubt strengthen friendship and brotherhood among peoples, which are essential for the promotion of peace, development and cooperation among nations.

The International Year of Sport and Physical Education reflects universal objectives. Sport and physical education play a major role in achieving global development goals. They provide an opportunity to renew our commitment to the basic principles of the United Nations Charter, including the establishment of peace, security and development, especially at this delicate moment in the world situation, when our support for the Organization's activities and methods of work is most needed.

The delegation of Qatar believes that, in the twenty-first century, the world's nations should uphold their commitment to the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter and promote sportsmanship and the Olympic ideal resolutely and actively in order to advance dialogue among civilizations and encourage social and economic progress in the world. We strongly support the call on all States to take advantage of the opportunity offered by sport to promote peace and development. The State of Qatar pledges sincerely and fully to support that endeavour. In that regard, it is evident that the world needs peace now.

My delegation is pleased to take this opportunity to reaffirm its confidence in the United Nations as the principal organization for establishing detente among nations and achieving international peace and security on the basis of justice and equal rights and obligations for all. The way to peace lies in mutual understanding, respect and cooperation among cultures and religions — regardless of one's gender or creed — the peaceful settlement of disputes and the promotion of a culture of peace through dialogue and education. Finally, my delegation believes that political will is an important incentive for achieving peace.

The Acting President: We have heard the last speaker in the debate on agenda item 48 and its sub-items (a) and (b).

The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolutions A/60/L.15 and A/60/L.7.*

We turn first to draft resolution A/60/L.15, entitled "Building a peaceful and better world through sport and the Olympic ideal", under sub-item (a).

May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/60/L.15?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 60/8).

The Acting President: We next turn to draft resolution A/60/L.7,* entitled "Sport as a means to promote education, health, development and peace", under sub-item (b).

Since the introduction of the draft resolution, the following countries have become sponsors: the Central African Republic, Kazakhstan, Qatar, Spain, Ukraine, the United Arab Emirates and Zambia.

May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/60/L.7*?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 60/9).

The Acting President: Before giving the floor to speakers in explanation of vote, may I remind speakers that explanations of vote are limited to 10 minutes and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Ms. García-Matos. (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela) (*spoke in Spanish*): We would like to express the commitment of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela to sport as a tool for attaining peace and development. We also note that sports constitutes the central pillar of the public policies currently being implemented by the Venezuelan Government. We express our recognition and support to the Italian delegation and Government for introducing the draft resolution.

However, we would like to make an interpretative comment on the eighth preambular paragraph of the

present resolution to explain why we did not sponsor the resolution, which, as we have said, fully reflects our commitments and policies.

As the General Assembly knows, the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela does not recognize as part of the outcome of the 2005 World Summit the final document contained in A/60/L.1. It is, therefore, our interpretation that the eighth preambular paragraph of that resolution refers to commitments of a general nature that should guide our Governments' actions in the quest for a world in which peace prevails and sports is given its proper place. That in no way implies that we recognize the September summit's outcome document in itself to be the result of the summit of our heads of State and Government.

Finally, with respect to draft resolution A/60/L.7*, we would like to express our reservation with respect to the second preambular paragraph, not because of the substantive commitments it contains but because it explicitly refers to the final document of the 2005 World Summit, which, as we have said, generates neither mandate nor obligation for our Republic. We would like that reservation to be recorded in the record of this meeting.

The Acting President: The Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of sub-item (a) of agenda item 48.

May I take it that is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of sub-item (b) of agenda item 48?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 43 (*continued*)

Culture of peace

Draft resolutions (A/60/L.4/Rev.1 and L.10)

The Acting President: Members will recall that the Assembly held the debate on agenda item 43 jointly with agenda item 42 at its 35th and 36th plenary meetings, on 20 October 2005.

I give the floor to the representative of Pakistan to introduce draft resolution A/60/L.10.

Mr. Khokhar (Pakistan): I have the honour to introduce, on behalf of the sponsors, the draft resolution entitled "Promotion of religious and cultural understanding, harmony and cooperation", contained in document A/60/L.10.

The agenda item "Culture of peace" is reminiscent of the commitment made by us 60 years ago, at the time of the adoption of the United Nations Charter, to practice tolerance and live together in peace with one another as good neighbours, to unite our strength to maintain international peace and security and to promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom.

That pledge was reaffirmed in the Millennium Declaration five years ago when world leaders resolved that the fundamental values of freedom, equality, solidarity and tolerance are essential in guiding international relations of the twenty-first century. Human beings must respect one other, in all their diversity of belief, culture and language. Differences within and between societies should be neither feared nor repressed, but cherished as a precious asset of humanity.

Yet another manifestation of that resolve was the acknowledgement in the 2005 World Summit Outcome of the cultural and religious diversity of the world and the commitment to promote international peace and security by advancing human welfare, freedom and progress and by encouraging tolerance, respect and dialogue among different cultures, civilizations and peoples.

To reaffirm those objectives and to launch a new era of hope and peaceful coexistence, the General Assembly adopted the Declaration on a Culture of Peace on 13 September 1999 (*resolution 53/243A*). The Declaration is a set of values, attitudes and behaviour. It builds upon the Charter-based principles of multilateral cooperation and underscores respect for life, ending of violence and the promotion and practice of non-violence through education, dialogue and cooperation, as well as commitment to the peaceful settlement of conflicts.

Contrary to the expectations and hopes of our common humanity, the dawn of the new millennium witnessed a profound transformation in international relations. The dangerous confrontations of the cold war have been replaced by the complex and equally dangerous realities of our world today. It is a world marked on the one hand by intensifying globalization, which eliminates distances and brings people closer

together, and by terrorism, violence, poverty and disease on the other.

The growing asymmetries in State power, discrimination in the dispensation of international justice, repression of people's legitimate aspirations and increasing socio-economic disparities have precipitated new threats to international peace and security.

We are experiencing a serious decline in appreciation for, and the practice of, universal and common moral principles. Human history has reached a crucial point where a choice has to be made between a world characterized by peace and prosperity or one that is torn by global conflict and disaster.

We are all aware that peace is inseparable from mutual tolerance and accommodation. The challenge we face every day is to replace fear with acceptance, harassment with tolerance, and hatred with respect. Cooperation — and not the clash of civilizations — must be the paradigm for our collective endeavours. Promotion of understanding, harmony and cooperation among religions and cultures can lift the veil of ignorance, the misconception and the prejudice that have become so tragically pervasive in recent times.

All religions and cultures share a common set of universal values. Religion and culture, therefore, must not be allowed to become a source of division, as they are sometimes portrayed. Instead we must cherish the unity and indivisibility of the human race no matter what religion or particular culture we belong to.

With that context in mind, Pakistan has tabled a draft resolution in the General Assembly, for the third consecutive year, entitled "Promotion of religious and cultural understanding, harmony and cooperation".

The draft resolution recognizes that interreligious dialogue and understanding, including awareness of differences and commonalities among peoples and civilizations, contribute to the peaceful resolution of conflicts and disputes and reduce the potential for violence. It acknowledges the contribution of various initiatives at the national, regional and international level, including Pakistan's Enlightened Moderation, to promote mutual understanding and tolerance among the peoples of the world.

While recognizing that the challenges of intolerance and conflict exist, create divides across countries and regions and pose a threat to peaceful relations among nations, the draft resolution emphasizes that all cultures and civilizations share a common set of universal values and can contribute to the enrichment of humankind. Operative paragraph 15 requests the Secretary-General to ensure the widest dissemination of the relevant United Nations material related to the resolution in as many languages as possible through the United Nations system, including the Information Centres.

I take this opportunity to state that in addition to the sponsors mentioned in the draft, Algeria, the Dominican Republic, Indonesia, Kyrgyzstan, Spain, Thailand, Turkey and Uzbekistan have also joined as sponsors.

I am confident that the draft resolution, as in the previous sessions, will be endorsed unanimously by the General Assembly. That will be an affirmation by the members of the international community of its shared commitment to advance the goals of universal understanding, harmony and peace, as well as security and prosperity among all nations and peoples of all faiths and cultures.

The Acting President: The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolutions A/60/L.4/Rev.1 and A/60/L.10.

We turn first to draft resolution A/60/L.4/Rev.1, entitled "Promotion of interreligious dialogue and cooperation on peace".

The names of additional sponsors were read out by the representative of Pakistan. The following countries have also added their names to the list: Argentina, Belize, Cambodia, Cameroon, Egypt, El Salvador, Guatemala, Guinea-Bissau, Haiti, Mongolia, Slovenia, the Sudan, Trinidad and Tobago and Turkmenistan.

May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/60/L.4/Rev.1?

Draft resolution A/60/L.4/Rev.1 was adopted (resolution 60/10).

The Acting President: We turn next to draft resolution A/60/L.10, entitled "Promotion of religious and cultural understanding, harmony and cooperation".

May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/60/L.10?

Draft resolution A/60/L.10 was adopted (resolution 60/11).

The Acting President: I call on the representative of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, who wishes to speak in explanation of position on the resolutions just adopted.

May I remind members that explanations of position are limited to 10 minutes and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Ms. García-Matos (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela) (*spoke in Spanish*): As we made clear during our discussion of item 43, "Culture of peace", last week, the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela reaffirms its commitment to the Global Agenda for Dialogue among Civilizations and the Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity. We share the spirit and agree on the substance of those resolutions.

However, we have reservations with regard to the fourth preambular paragraph of draft resolution A/60/L.10 and the third preambular paragraph of draft resolution A/60/L.4/Rev.1, not because of substantive issues, but because they refer to the 2005 World Summit Outcome document, which, as we have pointed elsewhere in this house, has no validity for our country. That document, because of its sins of omission, provides no mandate for and imposes no obligation on the Republic.

The Acting President: We have heard the only speaker in explanation of position.

May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 43?

It was so decided.

The President returned to the Chair.

Programme of work

The President: I would like to inform members that document A/INF/60/3/Rev.2, containing a revised programme of work and schedule of plenary meetings for the months of November and December was issued this morning. The revised document contains changes with regard to the consideration of agenda item 14, "The situation in the Middle East", and agenda item 15, "Question of Palestine".

In addition, the consideration of agenda item 49, "Information and communication technologies for development", has been postponed to a later date.

Statement by the President

The President: I would like to make a short statement in connection with the Assembly's consideration of agenda item 49.

Pursuant to General Assembly resolution 56/183, dated 21 September 2001, the second phase of the World Summit on the Information Society will take place in Tunis, Tunisia, from 16 to 18 November 2005. The Summit, in both its Geneva and its Tunis phases, is an important event, and will be a major addition to the series of high-level conferences held recently on economic and social issues within the United Nations system.

At the world summit in September, our leaders committed themselves to the outcome document, inter alia, to building a people-centred and inclusive information society so as to enhance digital opportunities for all people in order to help bridge the digital divide, putting the potential of information and communication technologies at the service of development and addressing new challenges of the information society by implementing the outcomes of the Geneva phase of the World Summit on the Information Society and ensuring the success of the second phase of the Summit, to be held in Tunis in November 2005.

In order to deliver on that commitment, I encourage Member States to participate at the highest possible level at the Tunis Summit from 16 to 18 November 2005. Furthermore, I urge all Member States to intensify their efforts in order to conclude negotiations on outstanding issues in the ongoing preparatory work for the Summit. It is, indeed, essential that the Summit reach consensual decisions, allowing us all to move ahead in this new era of high technology, with common objectives and enhanced means for achieving them.

As the purpose of this endeavour is to build a people-centred and inclusive information society, the positive contribution to the Summit of all stakeholders, including civil society and the private sector, is also of paramount importance. I am confident that the members of the General Assembly are looking forward to receiving the report of the International

Telecommunications Union on the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society as soon as possible after the Summit.

I would like to remind members that the list of speakers for items listed in document A/INF/60/Rev.2 is open.

The meeting rose at 11.45 p.m.